

IN THE CLAIMS

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Please amend the claims to read as follows:

1. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer, said guide comprising:
  - a flexible position member including a first end, a second end, and an alignment mark near said second end;
  - a body adapted to slidably engage said position member such that said first end of said position member extends horizontally from said body, and said second end of said position member extends vertically from said body; and
  - a mount for coupling said body to said trailer; andwhereby, when said tow vehicle approaches said trailer said tow vehicle pushes said flexible position member through said body such that the height of said alignment mark is indicative of the distance between said tow vehicle and said trailer.
2. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1, wherein said position member comprises a flexible steel tape.
3. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1, wherein the position of said alignment mark is adjustable.
4. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 3, wherein said alignment mark comprises a movable sticker.
5. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1, wherein said body further includes a vertical support adapted to support a generally vertical section of said position member.
6. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 5, wherein said vertical support includes at least one position member retainer.

7. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 5,  
wherein said vertical support includes a target mark such that the alignment of said alignment  
mark with said target mark is indicative of proper alignment of said tow vehicle with said trailer.

8. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1,  
wherein said body further includes a horizontal support adapted to support a generally horizontal  
section of said position member.

9. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 8,  
wherein:  
said body includes a vertical support adapted to support a vertical section of said position  
member; and  
wherein at least one of said vertical support and said horizontal support is collapsible.

10. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1,  
further comprising a target mark adapted for placement on one of said tow vehicle, said trailer, or  
said guide, such that the alignment of said alignment mark with said target mark is indicative of  
proper alignment of said tow vehicle and said trailer.

11. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 10,  
wherein the position of said target mark is adjustable.

12. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 10,  
wherein said target mark is visible in a rear view mirror of said tow vehicle.

13. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1,  
wherein said guide further includes a visual sight adapted for mounting to said tow vehicle to  
facilitate lateral alignment of said tow vehicle and said trailer.

14. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 13, wherein said visual sight comprises a cover having a stripe thereon, said cover adapted for placement over a tailgate of said tow vehicle.

15. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 13, wherein said visual sight comprises a mark on said tow vehicle visible through a rear view mirror of said tow vehicle.

16. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 15, wherein said mark comprises a sticker placed on said rear view mirror.

17. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 15, wherein said mark comprises a sticker placed on a rear window of said tow vehicle.

18. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1, wherein said mount comprises:

- a first portion for engaging said trailer; and
- a second portion adapted to detachably engage said body of said guide.

19. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 18, wherein said first portion of said mount comprises a clamp.

20. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 19, wherein said second portion comprises a vertical member adapted to slidably engage a portion of said body.

21. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 20, wherein a portion of said body and a complementary portion of said vertical member of said mount are dovetailed to facilitate slidable engagement of said vertical member and said body.

22. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 20, wherein at least a portion of said vertical member is slotted to receive a portion of said body.

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23. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 20, wherein the bottom distal end of said vertical member includes a position stop to vertically position said guide when said body and said vertical member are engaged.

24. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1, further comprising a removable base, said removable base adapted to magnetically engage said trailer, and to facilitate the attachment of said mount thereto.

25. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1, wherein said position member is disposed so as to engage a flat portion of said tow vehicle.

26. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1, wherein one portion of said position member is disposed over said receiver.

27. (original) A guide for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer according to Claim 1, wherein said guide further comprises:

a visual sight adapted to engage said tow vehicle and to a laterally align said tow vehicle and said trailer; and

a target mark such that the alignment of said alignment mark with said target mark is indicative of proper alignment of said tow vehicle and said trailer; and wherein said visual sight and said target mark comprise the same mark.

28. (original) A method for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer using a guide, said method comprising:

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fitting said trailer with said guide, said guide including a flexible position member having a first end and a second end, and a body adapted to slidably engage said position member such that said first end of said position member extends horizontally from said body and said second end of said position member extends vertically from said body;

extending said first end of said flexible position member toward said tow vehicle;

backing said tow vehicle toward said trailer to engage said first end of said position member with said tow vehicle; and

pushing said position member through said guide until said second end of said position member reaches a predetermined height.

29. (original) A method for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer using a guide according to Claim 28, wherein said step of fitting said trailer with said guide includes detachably mounting said guide to said trailer.

30. (original) A method for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer using a guide according to Claim 29, wherein said step of detachably mounting said guide includes sliding a portion of said guide over a complementary mount fixed to said trailer.

31. (original) A method for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer using a guide according to Claim 29, wherein said step of detachably mounting said guide to said trailer includes magnetically coupling a removable base to said trailer.

32. (original) A method for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer using a guide according to Claim 28, wherein:

said position member includes an alignment mark disposed near said second end; and

said step of pushing said position member further includes pushing said position member through said guide until said alignment mark reaches a predetermined height.

33. (original) A method for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer using a guide according to Claim 32, wherein:

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one of said guide, said tow vehicle, and said trailer includes a target mark; and  
said step of pushing said position member further includes pushing said position member through said guide with said tow vehicle until said alignment mark is aligned with said target mark.

34. (original) A method for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer using a guide according to Claim 28, wherein:

said tow vehicle includes a visual sight; and  
said method of aligning said tow vehicle with said trailer further includes the step of laterally aligning said tow vehicle with said trailer by laterally aligning said visual sight with a portion of said guide.

35. (original) A method for aligning a tow vehicle with a trailer using a guide according to Claim 28, further comprising a step of initially calibrating said guide, said step of initially calibrating said guide comprising:

aligning said tow vehicle and said trailer;  
attaching said guide to said trailer;  
extending said first end of said position member toward said tow vehicle until it contacts said tow vehicle; and  
recording the vertical position of said second end of said position member as said predetermined height.

36. (canceled)

37. (canceled)

IN THE DRAWINGS

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Applicant requests permission to substitute Replacement Sheets 1-6 of formal drawings for the informal sheets 1-6 originally filed.